

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 2134

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EGEN OECD EI
SUBJ: XCSS-NORTH/SOUTH AND EAST/WEST ISSUED

REFS: (A) STATE 244132, (B) STATE 248015

1. SUMMARY: THE IRISH INTEND TO OPPOSE THE US EAST/WEST
INITIATIVE OF OECD BECAUSE OF THE WAY IT WAS LAUNCHED AND
BECAUSE IT TRESPASSES TOO MUCH ON EC PREROGATIVES. THEY WILL
NOT OPPOSE THE NORTH/SOUTH INITIATIVE BUT ARE SKEPTICAL OF ITS
VIABILITY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE IRISH OFFICIALS DEALING WITH OECD MATTERS ASKED US
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TO BRIEF THEM ON ANY US INITIATIVES WHICH MIGHT COME UP AT

THE XCSS OCTOBER MEETING. AS IT TURNED OUT, THEY HAD HEARD FROM THE EC COMMISSION AND OTHER EC PARTNERS OF OUR APPROACHES PER REFTTEL A. WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PASS ON THE INFORMATION FROM REFTTELS A AND B SINCE THE IRISH WERE OBVIOUSLY GETTING THE INFORMATION SECONDHAND.

3. EAST/WEST INITIATIVE (REFTTEL A). COUNSELOR MCCABE TOLD US THAT THE IRISH ARE VERY UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE AND WILL OPPOSE IT. THEY HAVE NOT YET CONSULTED WITH THE EC BUT ASSUME FROM "CERTAIN NOISES" THAT IT WILL BE OPPOSED BY MOST IF NOT ALL OF THE EC. THEY OBJECT TO: 1) THE WAY IT WAS LAUNCHED - PRIOR CONSULTATION WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER (WE DID NOT MENTION THAT ONLY SEVEN OF THE NINE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE INFORMED - THIS WOULD HAVE MADE THE IRISH EVEN MORE UPSET); 2) THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROGRAM, WHICH STRAYS INTO MANY AREAS IN WHICH THE EC HAS PRIMARY COMPETENCE, E.G. TRADE, AND THE OECD IS THE WRONG FORUM FOR DISCUSSING MANY EAST/WEST ISSUES. MCCABE MENTIONED AS A REAL PROBLEM THE ISSUE OF THE COMECON APPROACH TO THE EC. HE SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN PROVING EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT A COMMON EC APPROACH, AND NOW TO THROW IT OUT FOR DISCUSSION TO A WIDER GROUPING IN THE OECD WOULD COMPOUND THE PROBLEM. THE WHOLE COMECON THING IS HIGHLY POLITICAL, HE SAID, AND CANNOT REALLY BE DEALT WITH BY "EXPERTS." ANOTHER BASIC PROBLEM AREA WOULD BE RECIPROCITY, WHERE THE US MFN APPROACH IS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE EC APPROACH. AGRICULTURE, HE SAID, IS ANOTHER OBVIOUS PROBLEM.

4. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE IRISH WERE OVERREACTING TO A PROPOSAL WHICH DID NOT ENVISAGE ANY GRAND NEW SCHEME OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS BUT MERELY SUGGESTED USING THE OECD AS A FORUM FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS EAST-WEST ECONOMIC ISSUES. MCCABE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT OUR PLAN WAS SO SIMPLE. HE SAW IN IT AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE OECD A LOCUS FOR COORDINATING POLICY RATHER THAN CONSULTING ON ISSUES, AND THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE ROLE OF THE OECD. MCCABE ADMITTED THAT THE FORMULATION OF EAST-WEST ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STRATEGY NEEDED SOME USEFUL MECHANISM. HE SUGGESTED THAT A COMBINATION OF EC-US BILATERAL TALKS PLUS THE NATO CONSULTATIONS WHICH WORKED SO WELL PRIOR TO THE CSCE FINAL ACT WERE THE BETTER WAYS OF GOING ABOUT IT. THE OECD
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WAS TOO UNWIELDY, HE THOUGHT, AND HAD TOO MANY DISPARATE VIEWPOINTS.

7. NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES - WE DISCUSSED THIS ALSO WITH MCCABE AND PATRICK O'CONNER, NORTH-SOUTH SPECIALIST. THE IRISH, THEY SAID, WOULD NOT OPPOSE THIS INITIATIVE BUT REMAIN SKEPTICAL ABOUT ITS VIABILITY. AGAIN, THEY BELIEVE THE OECD IS NOT CAPABLE OF "COORDINATING" POLICY, ONLY "CONSULTING" AND

EXCHANGING VIEWPOINTS. TOO MUCH DISCUSSION OF THESE
ISSUES AT THE OECD WOULD REVEAL AND EXACERBATE EC DIFFERENCES
ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES, AND ALSO EC-US DIFFERENCES. THE IRISH
BELIEVE THAT NO PLANNERS' GROUP, AT LEAST AT PRESENT, COULD
HOPE TO BRIDGE THE DIFFERENCES. IF NORTH-SOUTH IS TO BE DIS-
CUSSED AT THE OECD THE IRISH BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE DONE AT
THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL ON AN AD HOC BASIS AND NOT WITH PRE-
PREPARED RECOMMENDATIONS. CURLEY

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